



Certain employment situations can make treatment and recovery more difficult. Some difficult situations are outlined below.

Employed in a Demanding Job That Makes Treatment Difficult

Your treatment won't work unless you give it 100 percent of your effort. People in recovery need to find a way to balance work with treatment so they can give recovery their full effort. Some jobs require long or unusual hours. Often the very nature of the work schedule has contributed to the substance use problem. The first task, if you have such a job, is to adjust your schedule to accommodate treatment. Work with your counselor and your boss or representative from your employee assistance program to do this. You also should find out whether flextime is an option. Recovery needs to be the first priority while you are in treatment.

Working in an Unsatisfactory Job; Thinking of Making a Change

During recovery major changes (in jobs, in relationships, etc.) should be delayed for 6 months to 1 year whenever possible. Reasons for this include the following:

- People in recovery go through big changes. Sometimes they change their views on personal situations.
- Any change is stressful. Major stress should be avoided as much as possible during recovery.

Working in a Situation Where Recovery Will Be Difficult

Some jobs lend themselves to recovery more than others. Work situations that are difficult to combine with outpatient treatment include

- Situations where it is necessary to be with other people who are drinking or using
- Jobs in which large sums of cash are available at unpredictable times

People in these types of jobs may want to plan for a job change.

Unemployed and Needing To Find a Job

When people are out of work, treatment becomes more difficult for the following reasons:

- Looking for work is often the first priority.
- Abundant free time is difficult to fill, and the structure that makes outpatient treatment effective is lacking.
- Resources often are more limited, making transportation and child care more of a problem.



If you are out of work and in treatment, remember that recovery still needs to be your first priority. Make sure the counselor knows your situation, and strive to balance job-seeking activities and treatment.

There are no easy solutions to these problems. It is important to be aware of the issues so that you can plan to make your recovery as strong as possible.